

Darwin Region Water Supply Program

Community Reference Group Communique



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The last Community Reference Group (CRG) meeting of 2023 for the Darwin Region Water Supply (the Program) was held on 4 December 2023.

The Hon Eva Lawler MLA, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory attended and addressed the CRG to thank them for their work over the year.

Chief Minister Lawler noted the important contribution that the CRG and the Program team delivered in 2023 to ensure the Darwin region will have a safe and secure water supply for the long term.

Please see the 2023 Program activities recap below, as well as activities planned for 2024.

2023 RECAP

AROWS

The Northern Territory (NT) Government has made significant progress in the planning and approval phase for the Adelaide River Off-Stream Water Storage (AROWS) project.

December's CRG meeting followed a media event in which Chief Minister Lawler announced that a \$6 million contract had been awarded to Australian and local company SMEC Australia to deliver the concept design for AROWS. SMEC Australia has been delivering projects in the Territory for more than four decades. The highly accomplished company brings strong experience, capability and highly specialised skills to deliver this critical component of the AROWS project.

The concept design will be delivered concurrently with a rigorous Environmental Impact Assessment of the AROWS project, with GHD Pty Ltd leading this work. This process will involve a number of scientific studies to better understand environmental impacts from the project and how best to minimise these. The Environmental Impact Assessment is expected to take approximately two years to complete.



1. Community Reference Group members met on 4 December 2023
2. Chief Minister Lawler announcing contract awarded to SMEC Australia



Manton Dam Return to Service

Following thorough environmental assessment work and community consultation, Power and Water Corporation (PWC) submitted their Environmental Referral Report for the Manton Dam Return to Service project in the second half of 2023.

In April 2023, PWC released a tender for the design and construction of the infrastructure required for the Manton Dam Return to Service project, including the Strauss Water Treatment Plant. Tenders closed in August 2023 and the contract is expected to be awarded in the first half of 2024.

A Recreation Management Plan for Manton Dam is under development by PWC in collaboration with the NT Government. The plan will focus on maintaining recreational use at Manton Dam while managing water quality.

Engagement

Throughout 2023, the NT Government and PWC have worked hard to engage with stakeholders and the community to answer questions and understand concerns regarding the Program.

Stalls were held at various community events including the Royal Darwin Show, Freds Pass Rural Show, Adelaide River markets and Batchelor markets.

NT Government, PWC and CRG members attended a community BBQ in May that was hosted by the Lake Bennett Community Association at Lake Bennett. Residents of the area spoke with Government and PWC reps and the CRG about matters that were important to them. Approximately 50 people attended with many meaningful discussions had with the Project team.

In July 2023 the Program team participated in the Developing Northern Australia Conference, held in Darwin. The conference attracted a broad range of stakeholders who are interested in unlocking the potential of Northern Australia through sustainable development, strategic economic planning and diversification.

In August 2023, senior members of the Program team travelled to Canberra to attend Facing North, where they showcased the AROWS project to stakeholders in federal and state governments and private industry.

In October 2023, PWC and the NT Government ran a stall and presented at the Water in the Bush conference in Darwin, attended by Government and water industry stakeholders and community members.

The Program Senior Director presented at the Major Projects Conference in Darwin in November 2023, which hosted over 150 attendees from a variety of predominantly Territory industries.

Looking ahead to 2024

The NT Government and PWC are excited to continue engaging with the local community to provide opportunities to directly speak with representatives on what matters to you. Our focus for 2024 will be grass roots engagement events, such as local markets and direct engagement with impacted stakeholders as part of the environmental assessment and concept design for the AROWS project.

The NT Government will work with CRG members to plan community events to connect with the community. Community feedback is vital in the project planning and approval phase.



2024 CRG meeting schedule

The CRG meeting schedule for 2024 is as follows:

- April
- July
- November

Meetings will be held in various locations across the Program area.

More information

If you would like to receive more information regarding the Program and upcoming events in your community, sign up to the community e-newsletter [here](#).

Contact details

Community members are encouraged to contact their CRG representative to voice matters related to the Program. Alternatively, community members can contact the NT Government Program Team directly by email on WaterInfrastructure.DIPL@nt.gov.au.



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on the Darwin Region Water Supply
Program.**